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Teaching Teachers: Starting, Sharing, Shaping, Synthesizing

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TEACHING TEACHERS:
STARTING, SHARING, SHAPING, SYNTHESIZING

by

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the Master of Arts in Teaching degree at the School for
International Training, Brattleboro, Vermont.

This project by Emilie Anne Krustapentus is accepted in its present form.

Date June 10, 1987

Project Adviser Yuse M. Spawns

Project Reader _____

ABSTRACT

This materials development project in teacher training is the documentation of my work with a group of Thai teachers in 1986 at the Phanat Nikhom Processing Center in Phanat Nikhom, Chonburi, Thailand, a camp for IndoChinese refugees. As a teacher trainer-supervisor I structured a twenty week system of training teachers to become more proficient in their teaching skills through a process-based approach of awareness and analysis of one's personality and character strengths. While focusing on their characteristics, the teachers went through a four part program of training. Each part concentrated on teacher development through awareness of skill areas, experimentation and implementation of ESL approaches, observation and feedback, personal evaluations, and individual style development. This Independent Professional Project is a step-by-step explanation of the twenty week structure of the plan, the focus and materials used in the evaluation process, the teachers' comments on the process as a whole, and my personal reactions after the completion of each section of the plan.

ERIC descriptors:

- Inservice Teacher Education
- Teacher Evaluation
- Teacher Trainers
- Teacher Training
- Supervision
- Supervision of Preservice and Inservice Teachers

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Introduction

"The language teacher cannot teach effectively without understanding varied theoretical positions--alternative ways of looking at the phenomena of language, learning, and teaching. This understanding forms the principled basis upon which you can choose particular approaches, methods, and techniques for teaching a foreign language. And unless that principled basis is your own carefully and thoughtfully devised theory, you become a slave to one way of thinking, a puppet without self control." ¹

While working as a teacher-trainer of Thai teachers at the Phanat Nikhom Processing Center, an IndoChinese refugee camp in Thailand, I was challenged by what I perceived to be a contradiction in the behavior of the teachers. The teachers I worked with fulfilled their duties completely as English as a Second Language instructors in the classroom but they seemed passive in the process of improving their teaching skills during the daily training sessions. Teachers preferred to be told how to teach as opposed to actively involving themselves in becoming more proficient in the application of ESL methods and techniques. They wanted me to give them all of the teaching ideas necessary for that day's lesson as if they were taking tools to a job and I was the warehouse from which they

¹ H. Douglas Brown, Principles of Language Learning and Teaching (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1980) 13.

equipped themselves.

As a purported "storehouse of information", I was frightened at the prospect of having to endlessly provide the teachers with ideas and procedures on how best to teach specific language appropriate to the given topics in the curriculum. I was aware that I was only one source of information with limitations to my creative talents. The teachers' passivity at not making an effort to improve their talents, I feel, was a direct result of the culture they were brought up in, one which fostered adherence to a system which did not encourage individual expression. Teachers seemed to withdraw from any active participation in the goals of the Teacher Training Program as if they preferred to quietly perform their classroom duties at the camp. As a result, their teaching was mechanical and predictable with very little variety to their daily presentations of material.

The supervisor's role at the Phanat Nikhom Camp is difficult. To the teachers, the supervisor is looked upon as just one more in a line of supervisors they must endure while working for the Consortium. Given the culture I was working in and considering the frustrations I had experienced as a trainer during my first cycle (twenty week session of instruction), I felt compelled to structure my own systematic way of helping the teachers to improve their skills. I didn't want to constantly have to provide ideas, ones which would be consumed and used up immediately when the lesson for that day was over. I felt committed to helping the teachers improve

some personal skills which would not only help them to develop their own styles of instruction but would also be transferred when they changed jobs in the future. Consequently, I decided to structure and implement a twenty-week training plan for my next cycle of instruction to meet the personal and professional needs of the teachers. This training plan and project in materials development I initiated at the Phanat Nikhom Camp is the topic of my Independent Professional Project (IPP).

Background Information

Having completed all the coursework in the Master of Arts in Teaching English as a Second Language Degree program at the School for International Training in the spring of 1985, I decided to apply for a position as an ESL teacher-trainer with the Consortium at the Phanat Nikhom Processing Center in Thailand. There were many reasons why I wanted this position. My Master's degree program was a process-based educational experience with emphasis on one's development of a personal approach to teaching ESL. The Phanat Nikhom Camp would offer an opportunity to apply those principles directly while training the Thai teachers. Many of my friends worked at the camp and enjoyed the experiences of working in a diversely unique cross-cultural setting. Also, I had been a Peace Corps volunteer in Thailand from 1980-83 and wanted to return to try a different job, working with the refugees. Knowing that the teacher training position would be a valuable opportunity for my career in ESL, I accepted the offer by the Consortium to start my work at the camp in September of 1985.

Former Teacher Training Experience

Before my position as a teacher-trainer at the Phanat Nikhom camp, I had had some previous exposure to the field of training. While in the Peace Corps I worked with Thai secondary teachers in the improvement of their methodology for

the English classroom and also helped supervise new volunteer university English teachers during their training with the Peace Corps. During my coursework at the School for International Training I participated in a teacher training workshop which consisted of eight regular sessions plus extra workshops with guest speakers. Even though I had some foundation in training from which my interest developed, I saw going to Phanat Nikhom as an inviting challenge. Helping the Thai teachers develop their own awarenesses about teaching style while integrating their individual talents and creative resources was to be my primary goal.

Background: Phanat Nikhom Camp

The Phanat Nikhom Processing Center is a camp for IndoChinese refugees located to the southeast of Bangkok, Thailand. The purpose of this camp is to process refugees who qualify for resettlement in such countries as the United States, Canada, Germany, France, or Australia. Refugees who reside at the Phanat Nikhom Camp have left Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. The ethnic groups found at the camp consist of Lao, Hmong, Mien, Vietnamese, and Khmer. The camp is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Interior in Thailand and has been in operation as a processing center for these displaced people since the fall of 1980.

Explanation: The Consortium Program

The Consortium, a tripartite cooperative project involving the Experiment in International Living, Save the Children Federation, and World Education, Inc., has been actively involved with the resettlement of IndoChinese refugees since 1980 at the Phanat Nikhom Camp. The purpose of the Consortium is to offer a program of instruction for the refugees to prepare them for life in the United States through English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction, Cultural Orientation (CO), and Work Orientation (WO) in the adult level program. Adolescents participate in the Preparation for American Secondary Schools (PASS) program.

Students who qualify for the adult program are pre-tested and grouped according to their literacy and oral skills in English. The beginning level or A level students are not literate in their native language while the E level students are very advanced in their speaking skills. Students in the adult program study a combination of English, culture, and work orientation for four hours daily and also participate in language lab for an hour to reinforce content that has already been taught in the ESL classroom.

Each component (ESL, CO, WO) has competency-based teacher's texts which cover twenty weeks of instruction. The text of each component is for the teachers to use as they cover content specific language and skills for each unit.

These units deal with such issues as medical and employment needs, housing, postal and shopping topics to departure and arrival varying according to the emphasis of the component. In the ESL and WO classes subject matter is taught in English while in the CO class the information is translated by refugee aids into the students' native language when necessary.

The Teacher Training Plan

In August of 1985 a new teacher training plan was put into effect on an experimental basis. The Consortium wanted all of the teachers to receive the same training; consequently, all of them would be the recipients of a more equitable, informative approach of being trained to do their jobs properly. Teachers in this new plan would be trained with others who were roughly on the same level of expertise usually based on the length of time they had been teaching at the camp.

The new teacher training plan is comprised of five distinct parts; pre-service training, in-service training, classroom visitation, independent work, and the evaluation and planning conference. Pre-service training (not addressed in this paper) is a two-week prelude to a twenty week period of instruction called a cycle. During pre-service training, new teachers to the Consortium are informed about the curriculum of instruction and receive some background information on

techniques and approaches to ESL. Teachers with previous experience at the camp receive some additional trainings in refugee concerns, advanced English, or specific approaches used in ESL during this time.

In-service training, classroom visitation, independent work, and the evaluation and planning conference are all the responsibilities of each trainer for her team of teachers.² In-service training means that each supervisor provides two hours of daily teaching preparation for her team through specific methods and techniques of teaching, materials preparation, advanced English, and assistance in the daily lesson planning for classes at the camp. Classroom visitation requires the trainer (also called supervisor) to spend at least one hour every month in each teacher's classroom. This visit can take the form of observation by the trainer on a teacher's lesson or the trainer can demonstrate-teach a class for the teacher and then discuss the lesson with that teacher. Independent work is a luxury afforded more experienced teachers where they can work on a project, develop materials, or create new work sheets for their component in lieu of attending the regular trainings on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The evaluation and planning conference (EPC) is for a teacher to set an objective and then work continuously on that objective for the cycle. Progress and results of each teacher's EPC is

² I have chosen to use the standard form she when referring to the words supervisor and teacher.

documented and kept on file.

In this new training plan, teachers must meet the competencies of five content areas, namely; subject matter, program, students, teaching, and English. The Consortium has determined that all teachers be well-versed in their duties at the camp. Hence, a list of competencies was established addressing the above mentioned areas. The teachers usually meet these competencies through their daily teaching duties and the trainings they attend. Three examples of program competencies are:

1. Explain the underlying American values and attitudes which relate to program implementation.
2. Explain the goals of the Consortium.
3. Explain the goals and functions of each component.

(see appendix)

The culmination of the five parts of the new training plan are designed to fuse neatly together to prepare the teachers at Phanat Nikhom to do an adequate job teaching the refugees. Yet, unfortunately, most of the teachers who are being trained in the Consortium's program do not express any interest in pursuing a teaching career. Rather, working at Phanat Nikhom is looked at as a stepping stone toward working with another foreign organization in Bangkok, or as the basis from which teachers will consider an advanced degree or overseas opportunities in another field.

Who Are The Teachers?

The majority of the teachers are Thai nationals though a number of other countries are represented at the camp. Native speakers of English from Australia, England, the Philippines, Burma, and the United States also teach the students. For the most part, the teachers are not trained in education. They are recent graduates of university and come from backgrounds in sociology, journalism, computer science, English, French, German, history, political science, and communications. Most of the teachers are between twenty-three and thirty years old, and for the majority, the Phanat Nikhom teaching position is the first real job away from home. To qualify for a position at the camp, the Thais must take the Michigan Test to determine their proficiency in English.

Rationale For My Training Plan

After completing one cycle of instruction with my first team of teachers, I came to the realization that the teachers I was training were not very enthusiastic about content-based types of trainings, such as what specific structures are the most appropriate for teaching the Housing Unit, or what are the over-all differences between good and bad lesson planning. Rather, when the content of my trainings centered around self awareness of their professional and personal talents or the discussion of how to apply teaching-oriented skills to another field, the teachers were motivated in participating in the trainings. At that time, the "self-development" types of trainings seemed to me to be the most appropriate way of using training time while still keeping the focus on the teachers' purpose at the camp: to teach the refugees some English communication skills.

From my experiences working with my first group of teachers at the camp, I decided to structure a training plan that would put the emphasis on the personality development of the teachers through self-awareness and analysis of their individual strengths. Hence, the inception of the "system" I am about to describe. My training plan covers the five content areas as prescribed by the Consortium's Teacher Training Plan, but this plan covers a sixth point, that is "personality awareness". By this awareness I mean that each teacher has particular attributes or strengths which can

facilitate her teaching IF she recognizes exactly what those strengths are. First, though, a discovery of specific skills must be made before they can be acknowledged and then used. My "system" centers on how one's personality is the major influence on how one becomes successful in her profession, and in this case teaching.

My twenty-week "system" was created because I saw a need to go beyond the five areas of development (subject matter, program, students, teaching, and English) and reach the creative resources I felt that the teachers possessed but which were not utilized to their maximum potential. The teachers at the camp were intelligent, personable individuals. They all had unique qualities. They did not exhibit these strengths in their teaching, however, and seemed content to present material to the students without considering how to relate presentation with their individual style. The teachers were more than capable of making lively, colorful materials, yet they had not considered why the materials were important for connecting meaning to language. They were not accustomed to thinking introspectively as they had been brought up in an extremely deductive system of learning. To become self-sufficient and more self-reliant, they needed to be given the opportunity to analyze who they were and how they could transfer that analysis to stronger performances in their work.

The distinguishing feature of my plan is that it is an ongoing developmental process. There are no competencies, as such, in this plan as the competencies are limitless. The teachers set their own objectives for improvement as they make discoveries about themselves and determine how to best accommodate their teaching performance by virtue of those discoveries.

My training system is an experiment. I wanted to put my own strongly felt values and philosophies into a plan that would offer the participants a structure for training yet within that structure offer ample space for individual thought and development.

Challenges To My System

In the initial stages of the structuring of this system, I tended to overlook three points, all of which were instrumental in the implementation of the plan. The first such point which caused me some concern was the simple fact that I was attempting something unorthodox in a very traditional Thai culture. Even though the Consortium is its own microcosm of ethnicity, training people to speak out and give their opinions freely was not common. Since my system would be putting all of the teacher's progress squarely on their own shoulders, giving opinions and offering constructive criticism to their peers would be a given while working with the plan. People in Thai culture don't generally criticize directly; they would much rather accept as is.

A second challenge involved the newness of my plan and its processing context compared to the already established plan for trainings. Once again, because of the nature of my system, constant introspection on the part of each trainee was mandatory if we were going to complete the plan successfully. Induction, criticism, and self-analysis would be key factors to the teachers' development of their personalities. Deduction, lecture, and lack of trainee participation would not be encouraged.

The third consideration which I had taken lightly concerned the backgrounds of the individuals I would be working with this cycle. I had six teachers on my team who came from

different college and university programs and who also had varying degrees of camp teaching experience. My teachers were: Poat Harnpol (the only male on the team) an English major; Ubolphan Eiamphoklarp, a public relations-advertising major; Jitpanga Varasiri, a French major; and Suchada Meteeekunaporn, another English major. These individuals all had roughly one cycle of teaching experience before coming to my team. In addition, there were two "experienced" teachers in this group. Jinda Ongpitak, a German major, had been working at the camp for three years. Nipawan Sawatdipanich, a math major, who had attended a teacher training college, had two years of experience teaching the refugees. So already there posed the problem of training individuals with different educations, various amounts of time spent working at the camp, and diverse personalities and family backgrounds.

Given the individuality of the teachers plus my realization that they were working at the refugee camp for a variety of reasons, I structured my assumptions about the implementation of a training plan that would meet each of their needs accordingly:-

MY APPROACH FOR DEVELOPING MY TRAINING PLAN IS STATED IN
THE FOLLOWING ASSUMPTIONS

A TRAINING PLAN IS MEANINGFUL ONLY WHEN A PERSONAL INVESTMENT IS ATTACHED TO THE PROCESS. Each trainee in any training system must decide what type of development she is seeking to enhance her personal and professional qualities. Each trainee, then, must decide how to shape and adapt her newly found qualities to be instrumental assets for her work.

Objective: To structure a learning experience that centers on self analysis and introspection.

THE OVER-ALL CONTENT OF A TRAINING PLAN SHOULD BE DETERMINED BY THE PERSONALITIES OF THE PARTICIPANTS AND THEIR OWN NEEDS. For a training system to be successful, the content covered in that system must be meaningful to the participants of that system. Therefore, the material in that plan must be applicable for each trainee as she determines the value of the information as it relates to her own professional needs. The trainees must actively contribute to the workings of the system through participation and discussion.

Objective: To create a format which fosters individual input from each of the trainees.

PROPER TRAINING OF INDIVIDUALS WORKING IN A CROSS-CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT MUST STRESS THE FREEDOM FOR A TRAINEE TO BE ABLE TO EXPRESS HER THOUGHTS, DOUBTS, MISGIVINGS, OR CONCERNS ABOUT THE JOB SHE IS ASSIGNED TO DO. A fostering of open communication during training encourages a person to analyze how to do her job better than she did previously. A sense of self expression must be promoted so that the individuals feel the freedom to share their ideas openly and freely. Self expression leads to cross-cultural understanding.

Objective: To provide an open atmosphere for the trainees to be able to agree or disagree with program structure, training content, or classroom procedure.

THE TRAINING OF ANY INDIVIDUAL SHOULD CENTER AROUND THAT PERSON'S STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, AND QUALITIES WHICH SHE HASN'T ALREADY DISCOVERED ABOUT HERSELF. A PERSON CAN ONLY IMPROVE HER POSITION IF SHE KNOWS WHO SHE IS FIRST. A training system must provide sufficient opportunity for a trainee to analyze her personality. A person must be able to state her characteristics as they pertain to her over-all development as a professional. She can, then, make the necessary choices to improve her teaching style and working relationships.

Objective: To structure a systematic way of training which continuously offers exercises which enable a trainee to make conscious decisions about improvement upon her personal development.

TRAINING IN A CROSS-CULTURAL SETTING ENHANCES THE OPPORTUNITY FOR A VARIETY OF PROFESSIONAL DISCUSSIONS AND PERSPECTIVES WHICH OFFER EACH TRAINEE CHOICES FOR INDIVIDUAL ANALYSIS AND ACTION. Interacting with persons of similar professional interests yet who possess uniquely individual perspectives on teaching and learning offers a trainee a positive experience in training. This variety of opinions offers a trainee the opportunity to compare and contrast ideas as she makes conscious decisions about her personality. Once those same ideas are considered then they can be acted upon.

Objective: To implement my system in such a way as to take myself out of the focus of the training and have trainee discussion and interaction as the center of attention.

A SUCCESSFUL TRAINING PLAN WILL ENSURE THAT THE TRAINEES ARE EXPOSED TO THE PHILOSOPHIES AND PRINCIPLES OF THAT PROFESSION SO EACH PERSON CAN MAKE INTELLIGENT DECISIONS ABOUT PUTTING THEORY INTO PRACTICE. A training program in language learning and teaching must provide the trainees the necessary exposure to the various teaching-learning principles that ESL fosters. Each teacher can then decide which methods and approaches are the most suitable for her personality.

Objective: To make the trainees aware of a variety of approaches, techniques, and methods of English as a Second Language Teaching enabling them to choose which are appropriate for their teaching personalities.

A TRAINING SYSTEM MUST PUT EQUAL AMOUNTS OF RESPONSIBILITY IN THE HANDS OF THE TRAINEES FOR THAT SYSTEM TO BE SUCCESSFUL. Any system of training must include input from all of its participants. The trainees must actively contribute to the structuring of content, presentation, and activities if the plan is to be shared and accepted by all.

Objective: To structure a system that puts equal responsibility for the success of that system in the hands of all trainees.

Format Of The Twenty Week System

Since one cycle of instruction at the camp consists of twenty weeks of instruction, the teacher-trainer's duties with one group of teachers coincide with that same twenty week interval. I structured my system into four distinct blocks with each block five weeks long. Each five week interval has its own set of objectives with a specific emphasis during each interval.

The four chapters are entitled: Starting, Sharing, Shaping, and Synthesizing. Starting emphasizes the importance of establishing a working relationship with my team. The teachers analyze their personalities as related to their teaching duties. ESL approaches and background information of ESL theory are presented. The teachers are asked to do some introspective writing as well as determine what specific teaching point they will work on for their cycle evaluation.

Sharing, the second five weeks of the plan, revolves around an over-all sharing of teaching ideas and materials, working together in the training room on lesson plans, and the sharing of responsibilities at the camp. In this segment, both the trainees and trainer observe each other teach and then provide subsequent feedback on that teaching.

The third section, entitled Shaping, focuses on each teacher's individual strengths and an analysis of how

utilizing those strengths can enable one to do her job more effectively. The teachers also have the opportunity to view themselves teaching after being videotaped. During this time the trainer teaches one class for each trainee and then receives feedback on her performance. The teachers then have the opportunity to switch roles with the trainer.

The final portion of the plan is Synthesizing, a culmination of all of the previous work together with additional analysis of classroom teaching. The teachers here observe one of their peers teaching and provide feedback in addition to a self-evaluation of their performance through the use of a critique sheet. A final analysis of their strengths is exhibited through writing. The culmination of everything that we covered in the twenty week cycle will be evaluated through individual feedback sessions and a group discussion on the effects that my plan had on the development of the teacher's improvement in the classroom.

II. Starting: The Beginning: The First Five Weeks

I structured the first five weeks of my training system to include personal as well as professional issues. I intended to maintain this balance between the two over the entire cycle and wanted to establish a relationship between personal and professional development right from the start. The topics we concentrated on these first five weeks mainly focused on personal awareness of the teacher's strengths in the classroom in addition to consideration of some areas of teaching which may need improvement. What exact points did each teacher possess which could assist her teaching in addition to analysis of what teaching points could one embellish to make her work in the classroom more beneficial to the students. Also, in this initial block of training, the emphasis was on creating a conducive atmosphere for the trainees and myself to work in, presenting myself to the teachers personally and professionally, discussing cultural differences between us, asking the teachers to do some introspective writing, demonstrating some approaches to ESL and discussing those approaches as to their applicability for our students, and providing time for the teachers to determine what specific goals they would like to work on in their teaching in conjunction with what particular issues they would like us, as a group, to work on together in the training plan.

My Objectives For The First Five Weeks Of My Training Plan

- to create an atmosphere among the trainees and myself conducive to open communication and trust
- to present myself as an individual with my own personality first before presenting myself in the role of the teacher-trainer, one who will supervise the trainees in the training room and the classroom
- to eliminate preconceived stereotypes and generalizations by discussing the cultural differences between the trainees and myself
- to ask the trainees to do some personal writing about how they perceive their classroom strengths as well as particular points which could be improved upon
- to demonstrate some ESL approaches for the trainees to analyze and experiment with
- to provide the trainees with time to discuss the approaches demonstrated and criticize them for their value and applicability
- to give the trainees an opportunity to decide what objective they will work on for their first evaluation and planning conference
- to provide the trainees with an opportunity to voice what issues they would like to concentrate on in the remaining time we work together

Following you will find a description of the way in which all of the above written objectives were carried out during the first five weeks of the training plan.

Establishing Rapport

Objective: to create an atmosphere among the trainees and myself conducive to open communication and trust

One of the first discussions I wanted to have with the trainees revolved around their and my reasons for working at the camp. I knew what my reasons were and also knew that they had specific ideas in mind before they were even accepted as teachers for the Consortium. I was hoping to create an open dialogue with my trainees. I also wanted to establish a foundation for sharing some ideas and so felt that talking about our reasons for working with the refugees would be as good a place as any to start.

Some of the reasons for working at the camp were straightforward and practical. Said one of the trainees: "I applied for the job here because I wanted to change the job." Others said that they thought working at the camp would be challenging and a good opportunity to work with the foreigners. They also thought they would get some new skills at the camp that they wouldn't necessarily be able to get elsewhere. I told them about my past experiences in Thailand and also told them that I was interested in helping teachers develop their skills in teaching. Our exchanging of ideas was pleasant and I felt that we got off to a good start by discussing issues which were personal and meaningful to all of us.

Later on in that first week of the cycle we started to discuss some classroom issues. My intent here was to gradually introduce some teaching concerns to the trainees so they could begin to anticipate problems and their possible solutions before they actually happened. Such points as: When do you make the students talk? How do we make sure we don't intimidate the students into learning when they aren't ready psychologically? What do we do when a fifty year old Lao man doesn't want to study with a twenty year old Mien female in the same class? I wanted to mentally prepare the teachers for these and other issues which typically present themselves at the camp.

The trainees had brought up some of the above-mentioned points and as I thought about their questions, I realized that I had a similar situation, though less dramatic, in the training room. What does one do when the people sitting before her are at various levels of their own professional development?

Establishing Respect

Objective: to present myself as an individual with my own personality first before presenting myself in the role of the teacher-trainer, one who will supervise the trainees in the training room and the classroom

I wanted the teachers to get to know me, my personality, and my sincerity in working with them. I thought that if they got to know about me, personally, they would better be able to understand my training procedures professionally. In addition, I knew that I would be taking lots of time to know the teachers and their own characters. The more we were able to relate to each other, the better, I felt, our working relationship would be. I was especially concerned over my role and how that role would be perceived. I somehow felt it important that I present myself in a positive fashion. I didn't want to be considered just "another supervisor" in a long line of many that some of the teachers had worked with already.

I wanted to create a "base" from which to converse with the teachers on a casual level. We talked a lot during the initial five weeks of my plan. We discussed our hobbies and interests, talked about our families, our educational and work history, characteristics and secrets about ourselves. There were numerous commonalities between us, yet professionally they knew that my duties were to help them to do their jobs better.

Cross Cultural Exchange

Objective: to eliminate preconceived stereotypes and generalizations by discussing the cultural differences between the trainees and myself

Since I felt secure that I had created a rapport with the Thai teachers, I was curious to see how they felt about foreigners living and working in Thailand. As a group we discussed how the trainees perceived Americans or foreigners in general, our values and priorities. The teachers said we always were in a hurry, were always on time, and talked loud. I agreed with them. I, then, told them how I felt about the Thais. I said they were never in a hurry, didn't have any regard for time, and talked too softly. We made many generalizations and had a great time stereotyping people. But, we did turn the conversation around to a serious tone. Time was an important issue to me and they got the idea that I did in fact want them to come to the training room on time. By mentioning some points that would bother me eventually, I feel that we cleared the air of problems before they became big issues. The discussion was humorous but productive nevertheless.

First Writing Assignment

Objective: to ask the trainees to do some personal writing about how they perceive their classroom strengths as well as particular points which could be improved upon

At this point in the first five weeks of my "system" I wanted to focus on self awareness. As a trainee being prepared to do a job for an even greater system, I wanted everyone to do some thinking about who she was as a personality in the classroom. The first piece of writing I asked the group to do consisted of the following points on the next page.

Kindly answer the following questions as best you can using examples from your past teaching to support your answers.

1. Describe one accomplishment that you remember the best from your previous cycle of teaching.
2. What is the one thing that you would like to accomplish in this new cycle of teaching?
3. Tell me about something that you have discovered about yourself in the classroom since the beginning of this cycle.
4. List your five strongest characteristics in the classroom. List five characteristics about yourself in the classroom that you would like to improve upon.

Asking the trainees to write about themselves was a very bold request. I don't think that anyone had ever asked them to think about their personal characteristics before. But, the exercise proved to be one of the best measuring devices that I employed. I kept a file on each trainee and recorded all papers that they wrote during the twenty weeks. When we did specific exercises, I could refer to the initial writing to see whether the teacher's ideas had changed, expanded, or stayed the same.

Introducing ESL Techniques

Objectives: to demonstrate some ESL approaches for the trainees to analyze and experiment with
to provide the trainees with time to discuss the approaches demonstrated and criticize them for their value and applicability

Since my job was to train the teachers to be better qualified to do their work as ESL teachers, I felt that the best way of tackling methodology would be to present some demonstrations of basic approaches. The individuals could then decide whether their students, the language being taught at the time, or their personalities were appropriate to experiment with the method demonstrated. I would facilitate the discussions after each demonstration of an approach. I

wanted the teachers to take charge in the discussing and exchanging of ideas. During these first five weeks of the training plan I demonstrated a technique which employed counseling responses, entitled "Islamabad", Suggestopaedia, a guest from Bangkok did a two hour presentation on TPR, a fellow supervisor presented Language Experience Approach (LEA), and I asked the group to watch some literacy videos upon which they demonstrated literacy techniques in front of their peers.

Not surprisingly, "Islamabad" became the over-whelming favorite of the presentations. This technique, which uses rods to depict a place of importance to the student, seemed to be the most generic of all of the new ideas presented to them. The trainees were able to see how the simplicity of "Islamabad" could be applied to any level of student and any unit of the curriculum that they taught. Two of the trainees presented places of importance to them immediately after my demonstration. Once they went through the motions of using the rods to conceptualize things, they were very enthused about using the technique in class.

The best part of this demonstration was that the trainees themselves were able to see the value of using the rods to elicit what the students already knew themselves, the reinforcement that the repetition of language created, and the student-centeredness of the activity itself. The teachers

were able to see how each of them would be implementing this technique in their lessons. They were on their way to making some teaching decisions which meant their teacher-personality would determine when and where to apply "Islamabad".

The literacy techniques, conversely, were dismissed immediately. Because our level of students was the intermediate level, the literacy techniques, the trainees decided, were not necessary. They said that the students already had a grasp of the alphabet and some basic reading and writing skills. They did acknowledge that without even trying hard, literacy was in fact reflected in all of their lessons anyway. Literacy couldn't be avoided. The teachers said that we need not elaborate on isolated techniques since basic concepts were everpresent.

The Total Physical Response (TPR) demonstration was very well-done, and likewise, was the subject of much controversy. The trainees said that if the philosophy of the Consortium was to promote student-centered learning, then why would they want to encourage a method that was basically teacher-generated. As a group we considered the merits of listening-based approaches and decided that once materials and language had been learned, then maybe it wouldn't be such a bad idea to use a fifteen minute review using TPR.

Suggestopaedia was an entirely different issue. I presented a Lithuanian lesson at my home complete with mats

and pillows on the floor with plants everywhere. About fourteen people participated in Suggestopaedia. Once I got into the lesson, some of the braver teachers participated. Others opted to listen and see what they could understand. After an hour, we talked about the lesson and the possible value of using this type of an approach in the classroom. The teachers said that they wouldn't be able to create such a pleasant learning environment at the camp. What concerned them more was their own English proficiency. They said that they didn't feel as though they would be able to talk a long time while encouraging their students to participate freely in the content.

Language Experience Approach (LEA)³ is a technique used to elicit student language through pictures. Once the students have an idea about a topic they want to talk about, the teacher encourages the students to draw their ideas. Then, the students explain what they have drawn as the teacher writes the exact words of the student on the same paper as the picture. By doing these steps, the student in effect teaches himself to read as now he affixes his thoughts to the printed words. This approach is very successful on the beginning level, or A level, at the camp. The demonstrator took this a step further and showed how more advanced students could

³ Language Experience Approach was first introduced as an approach to teach reading to native speakers of English.

elicit language and then correct their own grammar. This demonstration was well-received though the teachers, new to this approach, weren't quite sure how they would use the idea with their level of students. We discussed some specific applications where teaching grammar through student-generated material was possible.

Setting Of Individual Objectives

Objective: to give the trainees an opportunity to decide what objective they will work on for their first evaluation and planning conference

Another important issue that we needed to cover in this first segment of my plan was the setting of each teacher's personal objective which was to be her focus while teaching throughout the cycle. I asked all of the teachers to decide for themselves what aspect of their teaching warranted special attention. I felt that they were the best judges of their teaching at this point. The concerns which they voiced as being most immediate were: finding appropriate activities to use with different level students in one classroom; finding appropriate activities which would elicit more student language; developing and implementing ways of teaching grammar; developing writing activities or exercises which reinforce student's listening and speaking skills.

EPC FORM # 2 ⁴

Staff Member's Name _____ Position _____
Evaluator's Name _____ Position _____
Date _____
Date Of Next EPC _____

OBJECTIVES FROM

RESULTS

COMMENTS

⁴ Consortium Teacher Training Resource Center, Phanat
Nikhom Processing Center, Phanat Nikhom, Chonburi, Thailand.

EPC FORM # 1

Staff Member's Name _____ Position _____

Evaluator's Name _____ Position _____

Date _____

Date Of Next EPC _____

OBJECTIVE

EVALUATION MEANS

ACTIVITIES

DATE _____

Trainee Input

Objective: to provide the trainees with an opportunity to voice what issues they would like to concentrate on in the remaining time we work together

By having the trainees decide for themselves just what areas they wanted to work on I felt that they would realize that I wanted them to be in charge of their own learning. Since I believed that the only way we were going to be successful as a group working together was to have me give fifty percent of the input and the trainees the other fifty percent, I decided to give the teachers the opportunity to tell me what they wanted to concentrate on in the training sessions. They seemed to agree upon some basic concerns which they all shared and so pooled their ideas for possibilities of future training topics. Not surprisingly, improvement in their English speaking skills and cross-cultural information were the priorities on everyone's list. Another concern was the inclusion of specific games and activities which were described in a resource manual written by the Center for Applied Linguistics. This resource book was specifically written for teachers to use at the Indo-Chinese camps in Phanat Nikhom, Galang, Indonesia, and Ba-taan, the Philippines. In addition, teachers expressed an interest in viewing videos on refugee concerns and they also wanted some independent work time to do research in the library.

Personal Reactions To The First Five Weeks

I was extremely pleased with our progress thus far. I felt very comfortable talking with the trainees about both personal and professional issues. They, in turn, seemed to be relaxed in the training room and in the classroom. They were enthused about their students and were optimistic about their progress at the camp. They shared ideas with each other freely and started to ask me questions about culture for the specific units they had been teaching.

In particular, I was grateful that we had spent so much of the training time talking about ourselves and our different cultures. The importance of getting to know each other was the primary reason I was satisfied with our efforts to date. I also feel that presenting myself as an individual who cared about Thailand made a hit with the teachers. They knew I was at the camp because I wanted to work with them, not as a matter of coincidence.

The teachers had begun to express an interest in developing their teaching skills. They were able to analyze the virtues and the drawbacks of particular ESL approaches and techniques. When they challenged the validity of these approaches as relative to the students' needs and level of English, I was taken aback. In a few short weeks they were questioning me, the system we all worked under, and some

basics behind the approaches our field fostered. They were applying some of the ideas in their own lessons now, experimenting with mechanical application of the techniques being used.

By creating a situation where the trainees input was an instrumental part of the over-all structuring of my "system", I felt particularly reassured. I thought that if all of us contributed to the content of the plan, the trainees would maximize their efforts and feel more personally satisfied as a result. I knew they were capable of determining what points needed polishing in their teaching. I always wanted them to tell me what they should be working on. At this point, they still knew themselves much better than I did.

III. Sharing: Dividing The Work Equally: The Second Five Weeks

The emphasis on the second five weeks of the training plan was a sharing of information by both the trainees and myself. I didn't want the trainees to get my perspective only, so I felt that the best way to maintain interest and enthusiasm in the training room and in the classroom was for all of us on the team to share the responsibilities. This sharing implied that I felt everyone was capable of imparting valuable information to the rest of us. The sharing concept covered a number of specific issues during this five week segment. Some of these issues involved the sharing of teaching techniques and methods during our daily training blocks, pooling our thoughts when we worked on the construction of lesson planning, preparing our materials together, teaching each other's classes at the camp, observing each other teach, and providing subsequent feedback and suggestions for future improvements in the classroom.

My Objectives For The Second Five Weeks Of My Training Plan

- to provide each trainee with an opportunity to share a successful teaching technique with her peers during training
- to assist the trainees in developing an efficient, clear method of constructing a lesson plan
- to provide the trainees with time for developing their materials during the training sessions
- to divide some of the teaching duties more equitably because of scheduling differences
- to implement and carry out my own method of classroom observation and giving feedback using an observation sheet I designed
- to ask each teacher to observe one of her teammates teaching
- to provide the trainees with an opportunity to give me feedback on my methods of training, observation, and feedback to date

Following you will find a description of the way in which all of the above written objectives were carried out during the second five weeks of the training plan.

Community Sharing: Techniques

Objective: to provide each trainee with an opportunity to share a successful teaching technique with her peers during training

The teachers had been working at the camp for five weeks. I felt they were comfortable with each other now, and I asked them to demonstrate a technique that they had successfully employed in their teaching. Everyone would now share some of her expertise with the rest of us. I noticed that when each teacher demonstrated her technique, each individual was confident in her explanations. Each person's individuality was starting to come through as they wrote on the board, used visuals to make their points, or asked the rest of us questions while putting us through the process of that activity.

After each presentation, the observers were given the opportunity to ask the presenter questions about her technique. The trainees were not afraid to challenge each other's opinions nor did they seem to mind being put on the spot. I also participated by asking questions to give the trainees something to consider the next time they used their activity in the classroom. I did not give my opinion, as such, but tried to remain neutral while the teachers considered the merits of the techniques presented.

Since I was part of the sharing process, I decided to present activities that centered around American culture. One of the upcoming units for them to teach was U.S. geography and weather, so I used the material and language to lead into information about my culture. They brought questions about American culture to training and we discussed the points they were most interested in. I designed a few student-centered games which involved trivia about the U.S. and the teachers discussed their applicability in the classroom. The teachers enjoyed talking about the U.S. very much as they were able to clarify some of their own misconceptions about American culture.

Lesson Planning

Objective: to assist the trainees in developing an efficient, clear method of constructing a lesson plan

The teachers were in need of putting their teaching sequence into clear, logical series of steps. I thought that now was a good time to go through some guided lesson planning with them. We took a "chunk" of material from one of the units and decided as a group what would be a practical and beneficial way of presenting the language and structures for that chunk. I had a particular format for writing a plan and demonstrated my model in training. (see following page)

UNIT _____ NAME _____ DATE _____
CLASS PERIOD _____ LEVEL _____ ROOM _____
LESSON TOPIC _____

OBJECTIVES

PROCESS






ACTIVITIES

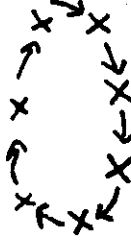

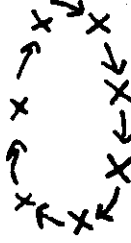

MATERIALS

UNIT 14 Appointments NAME Emilie Krustapentus DATE April 9, 1986

CLASS PERIOD Cross Cycle Training LEVEL All Levels ROOM 12 a

LESSON TOPIC Demonstration: Lesson Planning: The elements of a lesson plan

OBJECTIVES	PROCESS	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS
<p>SWBA to give the time that they perform specific activities of their daily routine in both the AM and PM</p> <p>SWBA to give the various activities they do on a given day (list)</p> <p>SWBA to tell the specific times they do certain activities and respond to the structure:</p> <p>"What time do you _____?"</p>	<p>Step 1.</p> <p>Warm up activity:</p> <p>Show  and  and Try to elicit question form: "What time is it?"</p> <p>See if the students can give the times when I put the different locations of the clock hands,</p> <p>Step 2.</p> <p>Ask S's what they do during the day/try to elicit a number of activities:</p> <p>Go to school eat breakfast get up study ESL</p> <p>List on newsprint the types of activities they do on a given day (Monday, for example)</p> <p>OR:</p> <p>Test S's writing ability-have them write on the newsprint the activities they do everyday</p> <p>Then: Have one student ask one other person:</p> <p>"What time do you _____?" student will fill in the times.</p>	<p>Two sides: T. shows: </p> <p>One side asks the time: the other side gives the time (repeat-switch)</p> <p>Pair work-Paper clocks</p> <p>One S sets the time and asks the Q</p> <p>Other S gives correct time (switch roles)</p> <p> <div data-bbox="1274 682 1453 892" data-label="Text"> <p>Go to bed Eat lunch Study WO Tape Lab</p> </div></p>	<p> wooden clock</p> <p>10 paper clocks</p> <p>newsprint markers tape</p>

OBJECTIVES	PROCESS	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS
SWRA to understand the concept of "to see" as it applies to meeting someone at a given time, and use the verb in context.	<p><u>Step 3.</u> When the chart is finished with the times listed, ask certain questions that will force the S's to respond:</p> <p>AM/PM</p> <p><u>Ex.</u> Do you eat breakfast in the AM or PM?</p> <p>Do you study in the AM or PM?</p> <p><u>Step 4.</u></p> <p>INTRODUCE: TO SEE</p> <p>CAN I SEE YOU?</p> <p>use examples, gestures to show</p> <p>CAN I SEE YOU AT 2:15 PM?</p> <p>Student: No, I study ESL at 2:15PM.</p> <p>No, you can't.</p> <p>Yes, you can.</p> <p>Have students ask each other when they can see the other person-----</p> <p><u>Step 5.</u></p> <p>Give S's paper-ask them to list 6-10 activities they do on a specific day and put the times next to the activities.</p> <p>WHEN everyone has finished:</p> <p><u>Ex:</u> T. Can I see you at 11:30 AM?</p> <p>S. No, you can't.</p> <p>T. Can I see you at 5:15 PM?</p> <p>S. Yes, you can.</p>	<p>Chain drill to understand the concept</p>  <p>Make 2 rows facing each other.</p> <p>S's in row A ask students in row B Q's about when they can see each other but T. guides the Question with a clock time.</p> <p>A. Can I see you at 5:00 P.M.?</p> <p>B. Yes, you can.</p> 	<div>AM PM</div> <div>wordcards</div> <div>SEE</div> <div>wordcard</div> <div>white papers to make the schedules on</div> <div>wooden clock</div>
SWRA to answer to: "Can I see you at _____?" as it applies to their daily routine/schedule thereby understanding the concept of when they are and aren't free.	<p><u>Step 3.</u> When the chart is finished with the times listed, ask certain questions that will force the S's to respond:</p> <p>AM/PM</p> <p><u>Ex.</u> Do you eat breakfast in the AM or PM?</p> <p>Do you study in the AM or PM?</p> <p><u>Step 4.</u></p> <p>INTRODUCE: TO SEE</p> <p>CAN I SEE YOU?</p> <p>use examples, gestures to show</p> <p>CAN I SEE YOU AT 2:15 PM?</p> <p>Student: No, I study ESL at 2:15PM.</p> <p>No, you can't.</p> <p>Yes, you can.</p> <p>Have students ask each other when they can see the other person-----</p> <p><u>Step 5.</u></p> <p>Give S's paper-ask them to list 6-10 activities they do on a specific day and put the times next to the activities.</p> <p>WHEN everyone has finished:</p> <p><u>Ex:</u> T. Can I see you at 11:30 AM?</p> <p>S. No, you can't.</p> <p>T. Can I see you at 5:15 PM?</p> <p>S. Yes, you can.</p>	<p>Chain drill to understand the concept</p>  <p>Make 2 rows facing each other.</p> <p>S's in row A ask students in row B Q's about when they can see each other but T. guides the Question with a clock time.</p> <p>A. Can I see you at 5:00 P.M.?</p> <p>B. Yes, you can.</p> 	<div>AM PM</div> <div>wordcards</div> <div>SEE</div> <div>wordcard</div> <div>white papers to make the schedules on</div> <div>wooden clock</div>

By following the format I had developed, the trainees acknowledged that they were better able to follow their ideas as they went from one step of their lesson to the next. For example, when they were on a particular step of the plan, they could easily look to the right of the plan and find out what materials they needed for that step immediately. They wouldn't need to worry about remembering throughout the entire period what they would need when. They started to use the plan everyday even though I didn't request daily lesson plans.

Materials Preparation

Objective: to provide the trainees with time for developing their materials during the training sessions

As a group during these second five weeks of my plan, we made materials that would be used in the lessons at camp. We took a specific concept from one of our units in the curriculum and made an activity or a game from that idea. We would consider whether the activity was student-centered, whether the idea was appropriate for measuring a student's progress, and whether the language in that activity was suitable for their level of learning. I thought that this sharing of ideas through the making of materials was one of our best creative efforts together as a group. I was

surprised at how willing the teachers were to comment on the validity of the activity. At this point I wanted the teachers to see how one idea could be the basis for a number of other activities. I wanted them to be able to get the maximum mileage out of their efforts; I was trying to show them some of the tricks of the teaching trade. All of their ideas always had the potential for something concrete. I wanted them to be able to tell me what that potential was.

Giving the teachers an opportunity to make their visuals and word cards during the training block was an extremely fruitful venture for everyone, including me. I learned more about making materials from these people than I had anywhere else in my teaching career. The teachers grabbed the opportunity to share and develop new activities and ran away with their newly found skills. Actually, this liberation was one of the boosts they needed in demonstrating their individuality and independence as teachers. They now thrived on producing colorful, exciting, and wonderfully original materials.

As part of the materials making process, we, as a group decided to work on a project. We wrote our own reading passages to coincide with each unit of the curriculum. All of us took turns writing the passages. An example of a reading passage for Unit 3, Family, is as follows on the next page.

"My name is Son Lee. I am from Cambodia. I am married. This is my wife. Her name is Mai Lee. I'm 36 and she's 32. We have three children. We have one son and two daughters. Our son's name is Da Ning. He is 6. Our daughters are Sher, 10, and Kham, 12. We are Khmer."

The teachers would then structure an activity around that passage. Generally, the passages were used on review days once structure and content had been taught. The teachers seemed to really enjoy using their own materials in this fashion. And, of course, they were equally pleased when the material was well-received by the students.

Cooperative Teaching

Objective: to divide some of the teaching duties more equitably because of scheduling differences

I restructured the trainee's teaching schedule during this second five weeks of the cycle. Some of the teachers were in the classroom four hours every afternoon while others had only two hours of mandatory teaching time. This inequity of scheduling bothered me because now was the hot season in Thailand. Heat combined with dusty roads and virtually no air

circulation in the classrooms made teaching four hours straight very difficult. The teachers who were teaching the two hours also felt uncomfortable to be doing less work than their peers. As a result, I made a new schedule and tried to distribute the hours in the classroom more evenly. I was also a part of this new schedule as I wanted to teach the students to find out what they knew and how well they were grasping the material.

Many issues surfaced as a result of the new teaching schedule. One of the biggest problems revolved around the students seeing too many faces in the week as their teachers. The teachers were all developing their own styles and now the students were being subjected to adjusting to these various styles. Also, I didn't want the students to lose sight of who their "real" teacher was. One person had to be responsible for the attendance everyday, plus we had to decide who would assign homework. How, too, could we make sure that the material being covered in class did not overlap with the previous teacher's lesson. Now it seemed that this new schedule was creating more hassles than it was worth. We carried on with the sharing plan for the duration even though we all acknowledged that there were a lot of rough spots that needed smoothing over.

My Observation And Feedback Of Teaching

Objective: to implement and carry out my own method of classroom observation and giving feedback using an observation sheet I designed

The "highlight" of this second five weeks of the plan for me was my observation and subsequent feedback on the trainee's teaching. I did not want to observe the teachers at the beginning of the cycle as I felt this would threaten what little security they had already. Since this segment of my plan was entitled "sharing", it was fitting that I now share some of my thoughts with them on their classroom performance.

I developed my own observation sheet for recording the content in the lessons. I introduced this sheet in one of the training sessions and explained my rationale for structuring the format the way that I did. I recorded the time at various points in the lesson, what the teacher was doing at that time, the reactions or responses of the students, and my impressions of the interactions between the teacher and the students.

I informed the teachers that just because I would be writing furiously, this did not mean that everything being recorded would be negative. I explained how I would stay in the classroom for about forty-five minutes and made a schedule so they would know what day and time they would be visited. I didn't believe in walking into the classroom unannounced.

OBSERVATION BY

LESSON: UNIT

TIME	TEACHER	STUDENTS	IMPRESSIONS

I tried to give my feedback as inoffensively as possible. I didn't start the feedback session with any commenting on the lesson, but rather the trainee and I would sit down with my observation sheet and we would go over the notes that had been recorded from the lesson. We went over each portion of my observation sheet, step by step, noting what they, the trainees were saying-doing and what the students reactions were at the time. As we went over the sheet, the teacher would follow very attentively as we read my notes. Moving down the columns questions and comments would automatically present themselves.

The purpose of the sheet was to provide the teachers with a mirror image of what they did in the classroom. Initially, they felt that being observed disturbed both their and the students' concentration on the lesson. But, once they were comfortable with my sheet, they realized that I was only reconstructing their actions. The teachers understood my motives so they weren't frightened of the feedback sessions.

I always waited to let the trainees speak up first when we later discussed the lesson. I initiated the process by asking: "How do you feel about the way your lesson went today?" They were always prepared to tell me what they didn't like about the way they taught. I would then ask them why they thought something had not gone as expected in the lesson. Usually they could tell me that they had rushed the

material, did too much of the talking, or gave poor directions. They knew when they had committed a teaching mistake. But when I asked them how they would change the situation the next time that they taught, they weren't always sure of how to rectify the problem. I also would be persistent at getting them to tell me how they knew that the problems were actually problems. Usually the teachers were reluctant to give solutions as they didn't have the experience yet. I, on the other hand, never wanted to tell the teachers how I felt unless they asked me directly. I wanted everyone to think without my interference.

Peer Observations

Objective: to ask each teacher to observe one of his teammates teaching

As another element to the "sharing" theme these five weeks, I asked each teacher to observe one of his teammates teaching. I didn't expect that they do a formal observation, like me, but I wanted them to have a chance to watch each other teach and get some ideas they could incorporate into their lessons. They had established an excellent rapport with each other so asking them to spend time watching each other was accepted enthusiastically.

The group absorbed any and all new techniques and activities. With these people there was never a dearth of

ideas. The teachers had the innovative techniques. What they needed were suggestions on how to successfully demonstrate these techniques in class, give proper directions, and then allow the students ample time in doing those activities. The teachers constantly helped each other out with varying views on how to make the lessons go more smoothly.

Feedback On The Supervisor's Performance

Objective: to provide the trainees with an opportunity to give me feedback on my methods of training, observation, and feedback to date

At this point in my training plan we were about half-way through the twenty week cycle. A formal feedback sheet on my performance to date as a trainer was due. I made a form with specific topics I wanted the teachers to address. I gave them time during the training session to answer the questions and then kept their papers in their individual files.

(see following page)

Kindly answer the following as specifically as you can using examples from our work together to explain your thoughts.

1. What are the areas that I have helped you in the most so far this cycle?
2. What have I done that has made you uncomfortable in any way?
3. Comment on the following:
 - a. the way that I give feedback
 - b. the way that I observe you
 - c. the way that we work together as a group
 - d. the content of our trainings
 - e. the way that I interact with you individually
4. What would you like to have changed if we could change it?
5. Comments, suggestions, ideas . . .

The comments that I received were straight forward and some were even predictable. What had I done to help them? This question received a variety of answers. I provided cross-cultural information, grammar points, the proper language for each unit, some advanced English which in turn assists them in their teaching, and techniques and suggestions for making materials. They even said that they liked the way that I made them think during feedback!

When they answered the question about what made them uncomfortable, I received the surprise of my life. Most of them said that I acted as though I didn't trust them and their actions. Some reactions:

"You seem to suspect me all the time. When you did feedback, you checked me as if I were not trustworthy."

"You know I really want your feedback but I'm afraid to talk with you. It seems that you checked us all the time. Sometimes I felt that you didn't trust me."

"It seems that you always check every aspect of us, for example, if you weren't in the training and leave us working alone you always came back the next day and asked what did we do . . ."

The criticisms were asked for and I got them. I couldn't complain that my teachers were apathetic about their work. Ironically, they must have put trust in me and how I would react to their comments to be able to say the things that they did. I decided that the best way to handle the situation would be to talk to each of the teachers and go over

the comments they made on the feedback form. We found some time when we were free to sit down and talk about their comments.

Personal Reactions To The Second Five Weeks

My questioning technique during feedback had started to present some personal problems between the trainees and me. My continuous barrage of questions about their performance in the classroom had made everyone uneasy about her teaching; hence, the teachers had become unsure of themselves. The last thing that I had wanted to do was to shatter the teacher's confidence. I was sorry that they couldn't appreciate my method of having them look inside to examine the "whys" of their teaching. But, I wasn't ready to give up my method because the teachers didn't understand the rationale behind it. At that point, I hadn't explained why I was giving my feedback in that manner. I was determined that they rationalize my reasoning themselves.

My cross-cultural sensitivity had been lacking throughout this exercise on giving feedback. I expected too much from my teachers. I had totally lost sight of the kind of culture the teachers were brought up in, one which did not foster

inductive reasoning. I wanted them to think about their actions and then react. Not having been given the opportunity to do this before, the teachers could not anticipate what it was, exactly, that I was asking of them. I had not even considered that I was making the teachers defensive about their actions. Because of my procedures, the teachers now became more reserved in my presence. At that point, I was well aware of an attitude change on the part of the teachers; nevertheless, I still persisted in continuing my methods of giving feedback.

Unfortunately, all of the trust that I had tried so hard to build during the first five weeks of my system was now slowly evaporating. I was very sorry that I had to come to this realization. What the Thais had considered "lack of trust" I considered "complete trust". I had trusted them to the degree that I wanted them to make mistakes and then correct those mistakes themselves. I had put all of my confidence in them and their ability to think rationally. I wanted the teachers to come to this realization themselves.

When we had the feedback sessions on my performance as a supervisor, I used counseling responses to make sure that they were telling me what they wanted to be saying. One of their biggest problems, they said, was expressing themselves clearly in English. I surmised that they would get the proper clarifications through my responses. This exchange proved incredibly revealing. The trainees explained how in their

culture when they are asked questions repeatedly, the first impulse is that the person doing the asking doesn't trust the individual in question. They explained that basically I was treating them as if they were children.

I had been taken aback at this point. I worked my way up to explaining my actions by asking more questions. I asked the teachers if they truly believed that I didn't trust them. No answer. I kept asking questions. "Why do you suppose that I want to know why you do certain things in the classroom?" No answer. "Why do you think that I ask a lot of questions?" Long pause.

Reluctantly, I finally succumbed to my standards and decided to explain to each teacher individually that my questions were merely a way at making them consider alternatives to the way that they taught. I explained that my method was not an original idea and that I was copying a technique used by the same individual who had devised the Silent Way. When they heard me say this, they became more interested in the whole process I was trying to put them through. The teachers apologized for not understanding and told me that I had challenged them in ways that they hadn't been challenged before. They understood what I had been trying to do with them, now, and expressed an interest in continuing in the same fashion for the rest of our work together.

Once I had completed my round of talks with everyone, there was a definite shift in attitude. We had undertaken a burden through misunderstanding and now were in the process of a resurgence, of sorts. The mood in the training room had shifted from one of semi-tense to pleasantly loose. I think that the teachers had reached a break-through being able to communicate with me the way that they did now. Subsequently, my efforts went noticed, and when we did exercises in the training room that they liked, they told me so.

I had put a lot of faith in my "system" and was still convinced that I was handling all facets of my plan properly. I was positive about the results that I had seen by my teachers. They had taught me a lot so far. Their confidence in me had been restored; consequently, I didn't feel as though I had to justify my actions to them anymore. I thought that since we were on an upbeat frame of mind, this time was as good as any for announcing, with their permission, that I wanted them and what I was trying to do with my training plan, to be the basis for my IPP. They, in turn, were stunned and flattered and said "why not?".

Progress Report

How had the teachers developed interpersonally and professionally these past five weeks? For starters, they were able to share their ideas and objectively give constructive criticism when asked. They could analyze a minor point and find some value or potential in it while transferring this skill to the appreciation of another's values. The teachers could also now dig deeply into their creative minds and construct some effective materials. Their confidence soared when they saw how successful some of their games and visuals were in the classroom. They acknowledged the importance of cooperating within a group situation and how beneficial it is to help each other out when necessary. The teachers had become more aware of their cross-cultural sensitivities and carried these feelings into their classrooms. Most important of all, I truly feel that the teachers learned that an authority figure need not be a threat.

We had all just shared one immense lesson in inter-cultural communication. The teachers were now starting to feel good about themselves in the classroom because they were starting to feel good about themselves as individuals. I could tell. They blossomed.

IV. Shaping: Awareness Through Self-Evaluation

Ten weeks of teaching and training have been completed. We have ten more weeks of the same. For the next five weeks of my training plan the emphasis is on self-analysis and awareness. The teachers will be videotaped this segment of the plan and will then watch themselves teaching on tape. They will do an analysis of their positive classroom characteristics and points needing improvement. During these five weeks the teachers will observe me teaching one of their classes upon which I will receive feedback on my lesson. Also, additional emphasis will center around individual strengths and how those strengths usually effect one's teaching style and the methods one employs in the classroom.

My Objectives For The Third Five Weeks Of My Training Plan

- to ask every teacher to be videotaped while teaching a part of a lesson
- to ask each teacher to watch herself on tape for the purpose of analyzing her strengths in the classroom and points needing improvement
- to teach a lesson for all of the trainees and then receive feedback on my lesson
- to provide time in the training room for discussion where appropriate
- to give each trainee an opportunity to consider what approach to teaching ESL suits her personality
- to ask each teacher to write about her strong points in teaching

Following you will find a description of the way in which all of the above written objectives were carried out during the third five weeks of the training plan.

Evaluation: Videotaping, Analysis, Discussion

Objectives: to ask every teacher to be videotaped while teaching a part of a lesson
to ask each teacher to watch herself on tape for the purpose of analyzing her strengths in the classroom and points needing improvement

After spending a few days working on lessons and talking about the language and content of the upcoming units we would be teaching at camp, I gracefully announced to the teachers that they would be videotaped for 30-45 minutes during the following week of teaching. I asked them whether they had been taped while teaching before. Only one teacher had been. The trainees became more curious about the idea after I had described my first experience watching myself on the video. They thought that probably it wouldn't be such a bad idea and so agreed to it.

Because the teachers had not been taped previously, I provided some time in the training room for preparation. I explained that they could choose any chunk of subject matter that they wanted between the two units that were scheduled that week. I asked them to teach a new concept so they could incorporate pre-test, presentation, practice, and review of the material. I also wanted them to implement a student-centered activity as a means of evaluation just to see how much material the students had mastered.

The group was grateful for the tips and was happy that we had spent the time in the training room preparing them for the videos. As the time for taping drew closer, the teachers became more enthusiastic about the project. I kidded them about getting hair cuts and wearing skirts for the occasion. The mood was now very upbeat. The newness of the experience gave them something to think about. I could tell they wanted to do a good job even if they were going to be the only ones watching themselves afterwards.

Since the emphasis on this portion of my plan was analyzing individual strengths, I asked that everyone look for one positive point in her teaching. What one thing stands out as a very definite strength they have in their performance. In contrast to the positive points, I also asked them to focus on a definite point in their teaching that obviously needed polishing. I requested that they please keep these two points in mind while watching the video so we could discuss the findings during training. They were receptive to the idea and agreed to focus in on those two points.

I decided to have a group discussion when the time came to talk about the videos. I asked each of the teachers to tell the rest of us the strength she felt she possessed in the classroom. Most of them acknowledged that pacing and sequencing were the strong points of their teaching skills. We talked about how they knew these particular areas were their strengths and what feature of their character leant

itself to those specifics. They had already stated during the first five weeks how they saw themselves as being patient, adjustable, flexible, well-planned, and self-confident. I now wanted them to see whether they could make a connection between their previous positive qualities and their most recently acknowledged positive characteristics. I was trying to see whether they had become more aware of themselves and their qualities since the beginning of the cycle.

So, too, in the same discussion, I asked everyone to state what she noticed about herself in a weaker sense in her teaching. These observations included lack of student participation, too much teacher talk, giving poor directions, materials not appropriate or not well constructed, and poor planning. Once again, I asked them to explain how they knew these were obvious to them. The points which needed work, they had said previously, were lack of initiative, lack of English proficiency, lack of preparation, lack of creativity, and indecision. I was curious to compare the before and after video exercise to see if they noticed the differences in their teaching. I was striving to have the self-analysis process be an on-going exercise. I didn't want the teachers to think that just because we had our discussion, they didn't have to stop improving upon those areas which needed fine-tuning.

My Teaching And Trainee Feedback

Objective: to teach a lesson for all of the trainees and then receive feedback on my lesson

The next step in the teacher self-evaluation process addressed a different approach to observation and feedback. I gave the teachers an opportunity to pass judgment on my teaching. I told them that I would teach one of their hours for them in the upcoming week and they would observe me in the process. Together we would decide which portion of the lesson I would teach and we would also determine what point in my teaching they would pay special attention to. I asked them to record my lesson so they could remember particulars of the lesson when the time came for feedback.

I had a specific idea in my mind when I decided to teach for the people on my team. I told the teachers that they could see themselves through my teaching. In effect, when anyone observes another teaching, she is making many mental notes about the person's performance. We unconsciously compare our teaching style with someone else making a little list of the similarities and differences between us. I thought that if the teachers watched me teach an isolated part of a lesson which emphasized the point they needed work on, they could compare my way of dealing with the situation to their way. They could then decide whose style worked better, or come up with a compromise of the two.

I now busied myself with six lesson plans and prepared to become a teacher once again. All of the teachers told me what content they wanted me to teach and we agreed on a specific teaching point that they could concentrate on while preparing for my feedback session. I had suggested the areas they needed definite work on: presentation of new material, evaluation techniques, eliciting student language, error correction, and sequencing. These now became the areas they would focus on. Plus, of course, they could comment on any other step or steps in my lesson. When they observed me the teachers used my formal sheet to record my teaching.

Now was the time for the supervisor to become the teacher and the teachers to become the observer. I was actually nervous about teaching with the trainees preparing to give me feedback. I felt awkward being in this position yet felt assured that the exercise would be a positive learning experience for both them and me.

When I taught for the trainees they took copious notes. They barely looked up to see what I was doing. I realized now what I must have looked like to them when I used my observation sheet to record their lessons. I could surely understand if they had been nervous all the times I was observing them though no one had alluded to such. I kept wondering whether I was in fact making many mistakes by

their continuous writing of everything that was said during the lesson.

There were two specific reasons why I wanted the teachers to give me feedback on my lesson. I wanted them to have the opportunity to watch their students interact with me, thereby giving the teachers a chance to watch their students learn in a more objective manner. And I wanted the teachers to put themselves in my place to see what it was like to observe a lesson and then record the information at the same time.

When the time came for the teachers to give me their feedback on my teaching, I couldn't believe the amount of writing they had done. They had emulated my style of observation by writing what the students said in reaction to my teaching. They had also written comments and reactions on the back of the sheet. We covered each step of the lesson recreating all of the interactions between the students and me.

The teachers with the lesser amounts of experience went over my teaching in a very positive fashion. They had a long list of all of the effective points of my lesson and commented on how they liked my activities and the materials I had used in the lesson. They were semi-reserved while giving me the feedback. I knew where I had made some blunders and had hoped they would tell me so. When they couldn't explain where I made the mistakes, I asked them in an indirect way how they felt about a particular step. Eventually, we would end up

going over that step, determining together how better that step could be presented next time.

The two experienced teachers, on the other hand, were anxiously waiting for me to do the feedback. They were skillful in presenting the material and so could spend more time fine-tuning their performance. These two teachers were extremely observant. They had written down those parts of the lesson that I had slipped up. They were not at all afraid to point out where they disagreed with what I had done. I received such comments as: "Do you think you gave the students enough time to practice the dialogue?" "How can you evaluate the students while they are doing the role play?" and "If I hadn't been in the classroom, how would you have done the role play model?" These teachers made me stop and think.

Discussion: Observation Methods

Objective: to provide time in the training room for discussion where appropriate

As a closure to what we had done so far this quarter of the cycle, we spent one of the training sessions talking about the two methods of observation and feedback we had just completed. I asked the teachers their impressions about how valuable a tool they found the exercises we had just undertaken. I wanted to know how they viewed the observation sessions as it related to their awarenesses of their teaching. The results were quite favorable. They had all agreed that watching me teach their classes gave them the advantage of not only watching someone else interact with their students but by my teaching for them, they were able to be objective about how the students were grasping the material. In addition, the teachers could better evaluate how their students learned. They said that since they were taken up with the teaching aspect, they really didn't have the opportunity to make objective assessments of individual learning styles and problems.

The teachers have now been observed by me, by their peers, and by themselves. They have observed me teaching and provided subsequent feedback. I had wanted them to view teaching in a variety of perspectives, and so far, we had done just that.

Analysis: Personal Teaching Approach

Objective: to give each trainee an opportunity to consider what approach to teaching ESL suits her personality

Since the emphasis in training had been on individual strengths and weaknesses in teaching and the variety of observations we were experimenting with, the next logical step, I figured, was to shift our thinking to the variety of approaches used in teaching ESL. What I wanted everyone to do here was to think about her personality and her teaching abilities as they fit into the philosophies of the various approaches we had talked about thus far. As a reminder, we had dabbled in the Silent Way, Language Experience Approach, Total Physical Response, Suggestopaedia, and a technique based on counseling responses.

We made a list of the approaches on a huge chart. Next to the names of the approaches we put the following criteria: appropriate level of student to use that approach, native language of the student, the content and language to be taught, usefulness of that approach given the camp conditions and the types of learners we teach, and the type of personality best suited to teach a specific approach. We then filled the chart in accordingly. The trainees did all of the discussing while I wrote their ideas in all of the blank spaces.

(see following page for an example)

	Silent Way	LEA	TPR	Suggesto- paedia	CLL
Appropriate for Level of Student					
Native Language of Student					
Content/Language to be Taught					
Usefulness: Camp Conditions- Appropriateness					
Personality Suitable to Teach Approach					

The teachers discussed all of the variables for the categories and considered the best possible answers to complete the chart. When they finished, we discussed their work. The most important category that I wanted them to think about was the section about what kind of personality is best suited to use a particular ESL approach. I was hoping they would be able to "plug in" their individual styles next to the approaches I had seen them use in the classroom. I was hoping, too, that they could make the correlation between what they had done in the classroom and what they had said on the chart.

This exercise was well-received and completed by the trainees without my interference. One of the vocal people who structured many of her lessons around presentation of new material and then questions said that the types of approaches she felt comfortable with were a communicative or natural approach. She couldn't plug herself into any of the models on our sheet. On the other hand, the quietest one in the training room was excellent at presenting new grammatical structures with rods without having to barely say a word in her lesson. She would present a structure once and relied on the students to follow her model. She seemed to use keen judgment when using the rods as she allowed her personality to create the proper environment for learning.

The young man on the team was very outgoing. He was very good at eliciting student responses and getting them

to participate in his activities. He called his style a communicative based system as he engaged the learners in asking each other questions and discussing the answers to problem solving exercises. He would use charts and grids and have the students fill in the information and then develop a number of activities from the information that the students had already provided. He could draw the students attention and then hold it. He was like this as a personality, too.

I let this discussion rest for a while. Wanting the teachers to process the information we had just talked about, I didn't plan any formal sessions with my teachers the next few days. We had spent beneficial time during training on individual style and felt that the teachers could use some "thinking time" to consider the merits of our discussion. The teachers proceeded to use the training time to work on developing some unit specific material for the Employment Unit, the next topic in our curriculum.

Writing Assignment: Individual Strengths

Objective: to ask each teacher to write about her strong points in teaching

In keeping with my theme on individual strengths, I asked the trainees to do another piece of writing. Since we were almost three-fourths of the way through the cycle, I wanted to do another assessment of their thoughts on themselves. The assignment addressed their strength in teaching. I requested that they write about what they considered their strong point in the classroom and how they knew that this point was their strength. I wanted some concrete examples so that I knew they had given my request some thought.

I had a few reasons for doing this exercise. First, I wanted to see whether the points the teachers had said previously in the cycle that were their teaching strengths still were. I was curious to see if they had changed their minds. I wanted them to acknowledge that they did in fact have a strong feature in their classroom presentations to lean on, hoping too that they would be proud of one aspect of their teaching. And, I wanted them to write about themselves. If they stopped to collect their thoughts on paper, they could see that they had a particular skill reflective of their individuality.

The results of the writing assignment revealed that

presentation of material to be learned, pacing, and student participation were their strong points. These qualities were not new discoveries to them. They had told me previously that these points were evident in their teaching. What was interesting, however, was their elaborations on how they knew these were their attributes. They furnished me with specific instances in their most recent teaching supporting their conclusions.

"My strongest area in teaching is student participation. I can encourage students to participate in any activities I use in class. I can evaluate the efficiency of my effort to encourage students to speak from student participation itself. Once in my class, I set up a mini-job interview situation. Each student possessed a question. There were about 12 questions. The rest of the class played the roles of people going for the interview. After one student passed the process of the interview, he took a turn for the interviewer. It seemed to me that the students paid attention to the lesson."

Personal Reactions To The Third Five Weeks

As I have labeled these past five weeks "shaping", I do feel that the trainees during this time have started to take pieces from their efforts while creating a "wholeness" to their teaching. I think, too, that while creating they have been able to understand how intricate teaching is. The teachers realize that there are many parts that have to work well together in a lesson in order for the whole to be successful.

The video-taping exercise gave the teachers an opportunity to think about their skills. I do feel that their thinking extended beyond what they had vocalized in the training room. It seemed to me that they wanted to express themselves more than what they did, but because of their lack of English proficiency, the teachers had to keep their ideas to themselves. Actually, I was happy about the circumstances in that the taping exercise was for them to analyze personally. They could decide how to act on the experience individually.

In keeping with the teachers often quiet nature, I often wondered whether the reason I didn't get "constructive" feedback from the lesser of the experienced people was because they weren't able to express themselves well enough or because they didn't want to challenge me. I'll never know. Though, for future considerations, I think that asking

teachers with little experience to critique a lesson done by their supervisor might be too large a task to complete realistically.

As a part of the observation-feedback that the teachers did on my classroom performance, there are other issues that came up which are worthy of consideration. One of these points is the use of a sheet during observation. I now question whether continuous writing of the content on a lesson is necessary for a teacher to "see herself" on paper. Realistically, the one doing the writing can not possibly keep up with all of the interactions done in class. So the use of a paper may be more threatening than constructive. Second, standing in front of the class and trying to teach while someone is engaged in the above process left me with mixed emotions. As I was being observed, I constantly felt as though I was in front of the firing squad. This activity left me second guessing my observation techniques. The whole process on the type of observation I employed now forced me to be in the teacher's shoes. I never realized how threatening I must have seemed. I now empathized and sympathized with my group.

What pleased me greatly was the response to the exercise we did in the training room on personal ESL teaching styles. I had begun the exercise by explaining what I wanted them to do with the various approaches and criteria listed. They, in turn, took over the exercise and only

involved me as the recorder of the information. They discussed the variables involved with the specific approaches and decided as a group how to fill in the chart. They didn't need me at all. I surmised that by including independent work time into the training plan, the teachers were used to thinking independently.

Their teaching had improved tremendously. The teachers enthusiasm in their work both in the training room and at the camp had not diminished at all. I was hoping that my "system" and all of the thinking and analyzing that I was asking the teachers to do wouldn't interfere with job performance. It didn't seem to. Actually, I felt as though the teachers were really starting to teach to the needs of the students and weren't simply covering material for the sake of completing the curriculum. The teachers cared about their students and I was equally concerned about them. The teachers came into the training room everyday prepared to ask me questions, give each other ideas, and learn as much as they could about teaching.

V. Synthesizing: Pulling All The Pieces Together

Fifteen weeks of my training plan have been completed. We have five weeks left to cover some areas of improvement which may have gone untouched. I asked the group to tell me what things they still wanted to do before we would finish the cycle. The teachers responded that they wanted some independent work time to sort out their ideas and do some research in the library. They also suggested more cultural information to help them teach their units better, and some more English vocabulary and structure work to help them with their own speaking skills. I knew that I would be asking them to do two more types of observations, plus I would also be observing them for the last time. A discussion on their skills development and the transference of those skills to other professions was one of my priorities. Final feedback on each individual was a major issue along with a formal group discussion on what the teachers had learned during our twenty weeks together. There were still many issues left to resolve.

My Objectives For The Final Five Weeks Of My Training Plan

- to provide the trainees with time for independent work
- to provide the trainees with sufficient time to reflect on their individual progress to date
- to employ a method of trainee self-evaluation by using a formal observation form
- to encourage each teacher to observe one of her teammates and then give feedback on that lesson
- to observe each teacher for the last time in the classroom for the purpose of final feedback and closure
- to discuss the skills that have been developed by each teacher during the training plan and consider their applicability to other professions
- to discuss each teacher's progress with her individually and receive her comments on my methods of feedback
- to conduct a group discussion on particular issues relating to the teacher's overall development plus a response to my training plan

Following you will find a description of the way in which all of the above written objectives were carried out during the final five weeks of the training plan.

Independent Work: Individual Needs

Objectives: to provide the trainees with time for independent work
to provide the trainees with sufficient time to reflect on their individual progress to date

Even though we had more work to do and the teachers were still laboring as diligently as ever, I wanted the group to enjoy each other's company as much as possible these last five weeks. Adopting the Thai philosophy of enjoying one's self while working, I became less demanding in my feedback sessions and the trainees, in turn, were more relaxed than previously. I brought music to the training room now, and acknowledged that the teachers could be freer in their wanderings in and out of the training room. I wanted them to have more time to work independently as they discovered their talents themselves without interference from me.

Independent work time took a few different forms in this five week portion of the plan. The teachers expressed an interest in making their own work sheets for their lessons. They felt as though some of the materials that had been used in previous cycles were not appropriate for their students. Also, the teachers needed some time to use the library to find some additional materials to support the content they would be teaching. The picture files and reference books supplied new ideas and visuals for them to use. The teachers seemed to

be constantly on the look-out for any new ideas.

Two things we did this segment of the plan gave the teachers an opportunity to express themselves individually. These efforts included the demonstration of some techniques they found had been successful in the classroom and presentation of some techniques to another group of teachers, not their own teammates. I asked each person to demonstrate a ten minute technique after which we all asked questions or made comments. When the trainees presented their ideas before their own group they were very relaxed. When they presented their ideas to the guests, they were not as sure of themselves.

As part of a group sharing and processing activity I asked the teachers on my team to work together making a Thai lesson for me, the student. I was interested in seeing how well they could piece a lesson together with each one responsible for a certain section of the lesson. They were able to construct a lesson on food which included a pretest of my knowledge, presentation of new vocabulary, opportunity for me to practice what I had learned, questions and answers, a reading segment, and a role play situation. The group used pictures of food, word cards, and a menu. They did a superb job on the lesson. I had learned to read some Thai and actually remembered the vocabulary a few weeks afterwards.

As a result of the Thai lesson, we had a feedback session on its success and my learning process. I had hoped

the teachers could tell me what I had learned before I told them. The purpose of this exercise was to see whether the teachers could analyze the six parts of the lesson. Ideally, certain people would notice some elements of the lesson that perhaps needed polishing while other people might pick out some points in an entirely different perspective of what was taught and how. In essence, I trusted that the teachers would appreciate each others' opinions and weigh those against their own.

More Observations: Themselves, Their Teammates,
By The Supervisor

Objectives: to employ a method of trainee
self-evaluation by using a formal
observation form

to encourage each teacher to observe
one of her teammates and then give
feedback on that lesson

to observe each teacher for the last time
in the classroom for the purpose of final
feedback and closure

As a way of testing what the teachers thought about their own teaching, I had each person critique one of her own lessons by using an evaluation form from the training files in the office. I asked the teachers to decide upon one lesson during the upcoming week that they would feel comfortable giving themselves feedback on. I asked them to

complete the form after that lesson, taking about a half hour of their time to think about what they had done and answer the form as honestly as possible.

(see following page)

OBSERVATION FORM ⁵

Teacher _____ Unit _____ Day _____ Date _____

Observer _____ Level _____ Period _____ Room _____

1. What did the students learn?
2. What did you do that contributed to the learning?
3. How do you know that you contributed to their learning?
4. What areas of the lesson would you like to improve?

Tchr.	Obsvr.	Comments
		1. Physical Setting
		2. Atmosphere
		3. Materials
		4. Teacher Language
		5. Teacher-centered/ Student-centered
		6. Directions
		7. Focus
		8. Student Participation
		9. Pacing
		10. Sequence
		11. Activities
		12. Correction
		13. Flexibility
		14. Evaluation
		15. Other

Shortly after the teachers critiqued their teaching as reflected by this specific form, I asked them to observe one of their teammates in the classroom. I figured that since the topics on the form were still in their consciousness, they would have some specific objectives in mind before they did their observations of each other. The plan was for each teacher to observe another and then find the time to give that person feedback on her lesson. This system asked everyone to be an observer and an observee. I stayed completely out of the picture in this exercise.

The last type of observation done this quarter was my final observation of the teachers. This last time I sat back and relaxed and did not employ the sheet that was customarily used. I didn't want to look at any paper this time; I wanted to enjoy the teacher and the students freely. I concentrated on the individual strengths of each teacher as she presented the lesson. Watching the personality interrelate with the student without worrying about techniques and content, I enjoyed sitting in the classroom for the last time.

Assessment Of Personal Skills Development

Objective: to discuss the skills that have been developed by each teacher during the training plan and consider their applicability to other professions

Since my whole rationale for establishing my training plan was the emphasis on personality awareness, now was the appropriate time to devote a training session on this topic. I wanted to hear an honest appraisal from the trainees on how they felt about themselves and whether they had become more aware of their individual and professional characteristics and strengths. Could the trainees view these strengths as attributes which enabled them to do their jobs more effectively? In essence, what had they learned about themselves which has contributed to their over-all development personally.

I initiated the discussion by telling the teachers what I had learned through working with them. I was honest in my explanation of how they taught me to respect their individual needs and be more sensitive to their need for independence. Basically, I felt as though I owed them an explanation for putting them through my "system". They had been more than willing to participate in all facets of the training plan.

They, in turn, explained how they had become much more open to other's opinions. They were now more accepting of

actions of others and admitted they needn't be so skeptical when someone asks a question about their actions. As a result of our time together, the teachers had become more open-minded while developing an awareness of individual thought, whether this thinking dealt with teaching or interacting in general. " . . . I have been more open for many things that happened and for other's opinion," said one of the teachers. I saw them as having expanded their intellects cross-culturally and interpersonally.

While discussing their personal development, I turned the discussion in the direction of their future goals. Just what did they want to do the rest of their lives? They knew there was a distinct possibility that they could be laid off in a future cycle at the Consortium. Falling student enrollment always concerned the teachers because they never knew whether there would be enough teaching positions available. With this concern ever-present, we needed to sort out our skills and determine what specific qualities we possessed that would transfer over to another profession.

The answers they gave me concerning their future goals were varied. They said that the types of awarenesses they had been exposed to this cycle could lead to many possibilities. Since they had become much more aware of who they were and what they had to offer a group or organization, they would be able to transfer such traits as organization, flexibility,

preparation, creativity, resourcefulness, and patience to any profession.

I had asked the teachers to fill out a form for me with their address, educational background, and a few questions that I wanted some responses to. One of these questions referred to future goals. Some of the teachers had expressed an interest in pursuing careers in social work since they had developed an interest in working with the refugees. One thought she might like to go after a career in computer science while another person said that he had thoughts of being a journalist or an editor. Another had a desire to do work in archaeology. And, of course, the possibility of being a teacher was always an option. They had goals and aspirations.

Final Individual Feedback

Objective: to discuss each teacher's progress with her individually and receive her comments on my methods of feedback

As a culmination to all we had done throughout my training plan, I scheduled feedback sessions with each teacher. I had planned to spend an hour with each teacher listening to what each person had to say in regard to five specific areas I considered the most important and obvious of all the issues

we had dealt with throughout the twenty weeks. These five areas were:

1. Where have you improved in your teaching skills?
2. What have you learned the most about yourself as an individual?
3. How do you now perceive my method of doing feedback?
4. What do you feel is your philosophy of teaching in the ESL classroom?
5. Do you feel any differently about what you wrote in your initial essay about your strengths and points needing improvement in the classroom?

I found these hourly sessions with all of the trainees the most pleasant experience of the whole twenty week session. Because we were about to finish the teaching and training aspects of the job, everyone was relaxed and comfortable talking with me. We had just about completed all responsibilities to the students and the Consortium. The culmination of all of our efforts was now before us for consideration, acceptance, or rejection.

The question about their philosophy of teaching ESL was one of the more interesting points we discussed. Asking them about the way they think an ideal class should be taught provided the teachers with yet another opportunity to voice their opinions about something especially unique to each of

them. One person saw her role as one of providing information, the students then being the judge of how meaningful that information might be for their future needs. Said she, "Since we are dealing with survival English, for me, the activities should be realistic and sensible."

Another teacher saw her role as one where she would try to involve everyone in the classroom activities by presenting information, asking questions for comprehension, and then asking the students to do the questioning while she took herself out of the exercise. She said her function was to provide the model for the activity. The students then had the responsibility to emulate that model more creatively.

Many of the teachers' thoughts were similar. They acknowledged the importance of integrating the four skill areas; reading, writing, speaking, and listening. They were well aware that it was impossible to teach one of these skills isolated without involving at least one of the other three points. Each one had her philosophy on error-correction and whether to correct at all. They all condoned student-centered approaches to teaching/learning and all agreed that the less the teacher talk, the better the student is able to experiment with English and form questions, answers, and structures. And, they maintained, the teacher was responsible for structuring the class in such a way to address the individual learning styles within the class.

Final Feedback: Group Discussion

Objective: to conduct a group discussion on particular issues relating to the teacher's overall development plus a response to my training plan

As the final synthesis of the cycle, I asked the trainees if they would be willing to participate in a group discussion. The topics of this discussion centered around three specific issues that we had continuously worked on throughout the whole twenty weeks. I requested that they address these three topics when we had our discussion.

1. Which method of observation/feedback was the most beneficial to you in helping to improve your teaching skills?
2. How have you best been able to develop or create new techniques and activities for the specific units you teach?
3. What specific things that we have done have contributed to the development of your style of teaching?

The response to the first question about observation was unanimous. The teachers agreed that the most beneficial type of observation done was when I observed them and gave subsequent feedback. The comments about my observing were positive. The teachers saw my feedback as a way of pointing out the little things that they would not have been aware of

otherwise. One of them said, " . . . sometimes I made a mistake . . . the supervisor never made me feel frustrated about that point, but she made a question about that point . . . so next time I can change."

The next question about what helped them the best in developing their ideas for teaching received an assortment of responses. Two of the teachers said that they got most of their best ideas from the resource books available in the library. They would find an activity and then modify it or elaborate upon it to suit the student's level of ability. They both also said that their peers were excellent resources for ideas as well as I when demonstrating techniques in the training room. One of the trainees said that she felt as though she was her best resource. She liked to create new activities and then discuss their applicability to the classroom with her peers. Another teacher said she preferred the old system where Wednesday was "grab bag" day for training. On those particular days, specific supervisors would demonstrate some activities for mixed groups of teachers. The trainees could attend whichever session they wanted.

The last question was the culmination of everything we had worked on. What specific things do you feel have contributed to the development of your own style of teaching? These answers ranged from the observation-feedback method I employed to the independent thinking and writing exercises that I had asked them to do.

"After this cycle, I changed my teaching style.
Everything that happened this cycle changed me."

"You helped me in the way that you asked questions.
At the beginning of the cycle I thought you were
going to blame . . . Your style, self introspection,
we can learn a lot about ourselves. This kind of
process helped us to be clear . . ."

"In this cycle you helped me a lot to think about
myself . . . sometimes we never think about the weak
points about ourselves . . . You helped me a lot
this way . . . I never got this before from anyone.
I really like it."

Each person had many things to say about the total effort
we had just experienced together. They had proven to me
during this feedback session that they had been giving much
thought to the process that I had just put them through. Their
answers indicated a very positive response to the total of all
I had asked of them.

Personal Reactions To The Final Five Weeks

In addressing the trainees individual needs while promoting independent thought, one particular thing became evident. As we went through the Thai lesson, I was struck at how well the teachers worked as a unit piecing my lesson together. When one individual finished a segment of the lesson, the next person smoothly made the transition to the next part. The group had taken on a team personality and I hadn't even noticed it before. Since I had done much in the training room with team issues and group discussions, I assume we had taken on a "team mentality" with myself included. This attitude, however, did not interfere with the expression of very definite individual attitudes and opinions.

I feel, too, that the security of working in the team situation at the camp can also be jeopardized if the supervisor is not careful in her requests. When I asked the teachers to present some of their ideas in front of another group of teachers they seemed quite willing to do so. But, when the time came for the group to do the presenting, I think that their security was a bit shaken. They, perhaps, were self-conscious of their English speaking skills. I'm not sure just what the uneasiness was about, nor am I sure that I would make such requests in future training situations.

Asking the teachers to fill out the self evaluation form was an extremely constructive tool for me in evaluating

their progress as teachers. They all answered the questions with specific examples from their lessons and considered the fourteen points listed on the sheet as those points related to the content of the lesson they were critiquing. Some took the time to write me a composition on the back of the paper. They elaborated on the lesson and wanted me to know more specific reasons why the lesson went the way it did.

In doing the last observation on everyone, I felt an incredible sense of liberation. I'm still not sure whether I felt liberated because I wasn't using the observation sheet or because I was doing my final set of observations. I'll assume both played a role in my attitude. But, watching everyone teach the final time was very rewarding. I absorbed all of the classroom interactions without necessarily isolating specific points. My use of the observation sheet will also take a different course the next time that I structure a training system. I don't think that it is necessarily constructive to record a teacher's lesson though I probably wouldn't have remembered key points otherwise.

As I have already mentioned, the final feedback sessions with each teacher was also an uplifting experience for me. The answers to the five topics that I covered during feedback reassured me that they had in fact done some thinking about their teaching. I was satisfied with the subtleties they had picked up during the twenty week cycle. They had made observations that I had not alluded to thereby demonstrating

their maturity as teachers.

These last five weeks were extremely positive for me, the teacher trainer. Through observations, discussions on personal skills development, individual presentations, and self-analysis, I felt that the teachers were well aware of who they were as personalities in the classroom. They were beginning to see themselves and all of their qualities in a self assured yet humble way, a way which naturally contributed to their performances in the classroom. I sincerely feel that they actually liked who they were. I know that I did.

VI. Summary: Final Remarks

In summarizing my system, I now have the opportunity to reflect on the success of the process as a whole in determining whether it holds merit for future trainings. My original objectives, as stated in the introductory chapter, can be used as a tool to determine whether I kept my initial focus; that is, to structure a training system which would meet both the professional and personal needs of the teachers. I had to determine what content was necessary for improvement of the teacher's classroom teaching as well as to create an opportunity for the teachers to analyze their individual strengths while deciding which of these strengths were beneficial for maximizing their potential as ESL instructors.

The first five weeks of the plan enabled me to get to know the people on my team personally. By taking the time to know the teachers as individuals, I acquired some awarenesses that I hadn't considered previously. One such awareness was the simple fact that each teacher on the team was at Phanat Nikhom for a specific reason, and not necessarily were all of those reasons similar. While ensuring that I adjusted the plan to meet the goals of the Consortium's Teacher Training Plan, I felt positive about providing the teachers with an opportunity to establish their own focus from which to work. In this manner, each would assume the responsibility for her personal growth. We shared common interests and ideas

in these first five weeks with the objective in mind that our understanding of each other's ideas and values would contribute to the over-all communication process for the duration of our time spent together.

The second portion of the plan provided time for the teachers to do some serious thinking about their methods of instruction. While each teacher started her own process of looking inside herself to see how she teaches, we, as a group, observed each other's teaching and provided feedback when asked. The second five weeks showed more growth and development of teaching skills than the initial five weeks. Entitled "sharing", here is where the teachers discussed the merits of their materials as they shared some of their tricks with each other in the training room. As a trainer, this second five weeks was also a tremendous developmental stage for me.

By the time we reached the third segment of the training plan, many personal and professional issues had been resolved. Now we all felt very relaxed and positive while working together. The focus of this section was the video-taping sessions on each teacher. In addition, I taught for each teacher this segment upon which I was provided feedback on my classroom teaching. This "shaping" segment also emphasized individual teacher strengths and the use of these strengths to one's advantage in the classroom. In this portion of the plan the teachers had broadened their own awarenesses of who

they were and what their characters contributed to their teaching. We all were starting to shape our teaching personalities. As I provided information and assisted the teachers in making new materials, my own development as an ESL teacher gained momentum. While discussing the specifics of ESL with the teachers, the subtleties we employ when illustrating a concept, the clarity of presentation, the steps needed when presenting, I grew with the teachers in my professionalism. We all seemed to be evolving into well-focused, capable language teachers with the assurance that we could still maintain our independence and individual styles while developing our expertise.

The last weeks of the system was a special event. The culmination of all of the sharing and striving to do a good job was like a "coming of age" for all of us. The pleasure of watching us all grow into competent professionals through the process of discovery, experimentation, analysis, sharing, and implementation was the height of the twenty weeks. The teachers had shown their need for independence, and when the independence was encouraged, they maximized its use. They discussed their teaching with each other continuously and constantly tried to make improvements on their styles. They evaluated themselves and considered what skills they had embellished over the twenty week plan. I was very encouraged with the teacher's positive working attitude these final few weeks, and so, too, was pleased about my own involvement as a

cross-cultural communicator.

My work with Ni, Nu, Noi, Poat, Phan, and Pu was a unique professional experience for me. These individuals provided me with countless opportunities to examine my own potential as a teacher-trainer in ESL. The system that I employed laid the foundation for this exchange. The close personal interactions, self introspection, and the process of assessing teaching skills has proven to be a viable base on which to design future trainings.

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ProgramPhase I

Program Design. The teachers will be able to:

1. explain the underlying American values and attitudes which relate to program implementation.
2. explain the goals of the Consortium.
3. explain the goals and function of each component.
4. explain the role, purpose and procedure of the staff representative committee.
5. explain their responsibilities and those of supervisors.
6. explain the role of the Consortium in the resettlement process.
7. explain the relationship between the Consortium program and the following:
 - a. State Department
 - b. Home Office
 - c. Bangkok Office
 - d. Host Country Government

Professional Responsibility. The teachers will be able to:

8. explain criteria for student placement.
9. define characteristics of students at different levels.
10. respond to and incorporate feedback (direct suggestion).
11. establish short-term professional goals.
12. act in accordance with program policies.
13. explain what to do in case of an emergency.

Attitudes. The teachers will be able to:

14. function effectively in an intercultural environment.
15. adapt to program changes and needs.
16. recognize oneself as part of a team/organization.

Documentation. The teachers will be able to:

17. prepare complete and accurate reports.

Camp. The teachers will be able to:

18. explain the procedure for reporting common classroom problems.
19. act in accordance with camp rules and regulations.

ProgramPhase I (cont.)

Facilities. The teachers will be able to:

20. demonstrate a knowledge of the component materials available to them.
21. explain procedures for use of all Consortium facilities and services.
22. care for program property and materials.
23. return materials complete and on time.

Phase II

Program Design. The teachers will be able to:

1. explain the teaching/training philosophy of the Consortium.
2. explain how their position relates to the rest of the program.

Professional Responsibility. The teachers will be able to:

3. analyze and makes choices about feedback.
4. give feedback when it is requested.
5. establish long-term professional goals.
6. explain procedures for proposing program/administrative changes.
7. explain procedures and outcomes of their individual projects to the supervisor.
8. assist in administrative and organizational duties of the program, when requested.

Program Responsibility. The teachers will be able to:

9. give guidance to peers.
10. independently analyze strengths and weaknesses and plan ways to improve.
11. actively participate in and contribute to all aspects of the program.

Documentation. The teachers will be able to:

12. document independent work for others to use.

Camp. The teachers will be able to:

13. identify major organizations and their basic services and responsibilities.

ProgramPhase III

Professional Responsibility. The teachers will be able to:

1. carry on professional dialogue with colleagues.

Attitudes. The teachers will be able to:

2. work independently e.g., present training, initiate projects.

TeachingPhase I

Lesson Planning. The teachers will be able to:

1. explain the need for effective lesson planning.
2. develop, organize and write lesson plans that reflect a student-centered classroom:
 - a. State purpose of the lesson: Why is the lesson being taught?
 - b. Set learning objectives/competencies: What will the student be able to do at the end of the lesson?
 - c. Break down objectives/competencies into teachable steps.
 - d. Identify language and specific content to be taught.
 - e. Select appropriate activities for pre-testing, presentation, practice, and review.
 - f. Sequence appropriate materials.
 - g. Sequence techniques/activities in a logical manner.
 - h. Identify appropriate evaluation techniques, including formative and summative tests.

Evaluation. The teachers will be able to:

3. evaluate student learning progress both individually and as a group.
4. administer developed tests.
5. evaluate lessons, activities and materials in terms of their effectiveness in meeting teaching objectives/competencies.
6. give feedback to students in a manner which leads to improvement in their performance.

Classroom Management and Instruction. The teachers will be able to:

7. teach to the competencies of their component.
8. assess students' needs and abilities both individually and as a group.

TeachingPhase I (cont.)

Classroom Management and Instruction (cont.). The teachers will be able to:

9. use appropriate techniques for their component.
10. demonstrate respect for their students.
11. establish a learning environment that is comfortable and non-threatening.
12. demonstrate effective classroom management given difficult teaching conditions.
13. communicate to students the overall purposes of instruction.
14. give clear, simple, effective classroom directions to students.
15. ask clear, well-focused questions.
16. use techniques for motivating students in order to increase participation in class and develop a more positive attitude toward learning (building self-confidence, independence, self-esteem).
17. conduct a student-centered lesson (apply selected student-centered techniques).
18. teach the four language skill areas (listening, speaking, reading and writing).
19. use appropriate techniques for error correction.
20. use teaching materials and equipment safely and effectively.

Theory. The teachers will be able to:

21. explain the importance of using English in the classroom.

Phase II

Lesson Planning. The teachers will be able to:

1. adapt a lesson plan, as it is being taught, in order to meet student's needs.
2. adapt and/or create appropriate activities for pre-testing presentation, practice, and review.
3. adapt and/or create appropriate materials.

Evaluation. The teachers will be able to:

4. adapt or create formative tests.
5. elicit feedback from students to improve teaching performance.

TeachingPhase II (cont.)

Classroom Management and Instruction. The teachers will be able to:

6. assess students' needs, abilities and learning styles, both individually and as a group, and adjust their teaching in order to facilitate learning.
7. assess students' background both individually and as a group, and adjust their teaching in order to facilitate learning.
Factors include:
 - a. Age
 - b. Gender
 - c. Students' class schedule
 - d. Living conditions in camp
 - e. Duration of stay in second country
 - f. Culture
 - g. Education
 - h. Work experience
8. reinforce the competencies of the other components, where appropriate.
9. conduct a student-centered class (select and adapt techniques based on an analysis of students' needs and abilities).
10. pace their lessons effectively.

Theory. The teachers will be able to:

11. demonstrate an understanding of teaching and learning theory.
12. demonstrate an understanding of the principles of second language acquisition.
13. articulate and justify their own principles of teaching and learning.
14. articulate educational principles and theories as appropriate to the program.
15. demonstrate an understanding of intercultural theory.
16. demonstrate an understanding of a variety of teaching techniques and methodology.
17. demonstrate an understanding of task-based or experiential learning theory.

StudentsPhase I

The teachers will be able to:

1. identify the basic aspects of students' cultural background:
 - a. Historical
 - b. Political
 - c. Social
 - d. Educational
 - e. Geographic
 - f. Religious
2. demonstrate knowledge of the refugee resettlement process:
 - a. Define what a refugee is
 - b. Reasons why students are refugees
 - c. Explain the typical chronological progression of students through the resettlement process from country of origin to third country
 - d. Explain common problems students encounter in that process
 - e. Refugee resettlement experiences in the U.S.
3. state individual students' profiles in areas of:
 - a. Name
 - b. Age
 - c. Education
 - d. Health--physical and mental
 - e. Family
4. demonstrate a knowledge of students' native language as it relates to the students' learning.
5. explain how the following factors can influence individual student learning:
 - a. Age
 - b. Gender
 - c. Students' class schedule
 - d. Living conditions in camp
 - e. Duration of stay in second country
 - f. Culture
 - g. Educational background
 - h. Work experience

Subject MatterPhase I

The teachers will be able to:

1. demonstrate competency in the subject matter of each lesson in their component.
2. state the purpose, rationale, content and objectives of each lesson within their component.
3. explain fundamental differences between parts of lesson which provide information, develop skills, and relate to attitudes.
4. state the function of and demonstrate safe and effective use and proper care of tools, materials and equipment used in each lesson.
5. explain the importance of teaching English literacy skills.
6. identify weaknesses in their pronunciation of curriculum language, and improve as necessary.
7. explain the rationale for the approach used in their curriculum (spiralled, sequenced, blocked, etc.).
8. demonstrate an awareness of the subject matter of other components in which their students are studying.
9. identify specific aspects (such as workplace, family, community etc.) of American, teacher and student cultures, and apply this knowledge in the classroom as it relates to the curriculum.

Phase II

The teachers will be able to:

1. demonstrate expanded knowledge of the subject matter.
2. relate each lesson within their component to the overall goal of the program.
3. supplement/delete curriculum content in each lesson in order to meet student's needs.
4. identify opportunities to reinforce subject matter of other components.
5. make constructive suggestions for improving the curriculum.

Phase III

The teachers will be able to:

1. participate in curriculum revision.

Appendix: 1

Teacher Competencies

English

Phase I

The teachers will be able to:

1. communicate effectively with staff and students.
2. express needs and opinions in English.
3. convey ideas in written English.
4. demonstrate an understanding of technical terms related to teaching and training.
5. ask for clarification when needed.
6. demonstrate continued regular improvement in English skills.
7. participate in trainings and meetings in English.

Phase II

The teachers will be able to:

1. demonstrate an understanding of the cultural implications of the English they use.
2. use an English-English dictionary.
3. use supplemental resources materials/written in English.
4. understand and respond to English spoken at a normal pace.

Phase III

The teachers will be able to:

1. apply knowledge of the cultural implications of the English they use to all aspects of their job.
2. demonstrate increased oral and written proficiency in English.

The guiding principles, educational assumptions and teacher competencies outlined in this section were prepared by the Consortium Teacher Training Task Force, Pattaya, Thailand, 26 February 1985. The Task Force was facilitated by Patrick Moran and included the following: Alan Vernon, Claude Pepin, Howie Gutow, Kathleen Hamilton, Elaine Dow, Chuck Schumacher, Barbara Garner, Willie Quinn, Court Robinson, Mark Preslan, Al Hoel, Mark Erlich, Chris Reznich and Barbara Sosnowski.